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THE BUREAU OF CRIMINAL RECORDS

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Identification bureaus in the past furnished to department heads the previous criminal history and records of persons arrested and charged with committing a criminal offense. Their problem was: did the person arrested have a prior record or not?

Gradually there developed the idea of grouping photographs of professional criminals, and here was entered a wedge for crime prevention by identifying criminals before their arrest. When the number of photographs of professional criminals grew to large proportions, identification officers began to separate the different types of criminals according to their specialty, such as burglars, buncomen, pickpockets, safe burglars and others. Later, photographs of these specialists in crime were segregated by their hair color, eye color, height, weight and age, and finally, in some cases the photographs were further divided according to physical peculiarities of the criminal.

Rapid and easy transportation has increased the number of migratory crooks, making it necessary to establish a system of criminal record exchanges between cities, with the result that the photographs of criminals have accumulated rapidly. The large accumulations almost destroyed the usefulness of photographic files, as it is a tiresome and often a confusing task for the victim of thieves to view all of the pictures, even though segregated as outlined above.

Partly to overcome these difficulties, but primarily to furnish information leading to the apprehension of professional criminals as soon after they commence criminal activities as possible, the system devised by Inspector Atcherley, of the English Constabulary, for the identification of criminals by the individual's method of operation, was revised and utilized by American identification experts, and the users predict that in a comparatively short time no bureau will be considered completely equipped that has not installed this system.

In addition to the advantages which this system offers for the elimination of suspects and the rapid identification of criminals by their victims, it will also afford peace officers, particularly the investigating officers, the opportunity to study and memorize the photographs of persons who specialize in particular types of crime.

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Bertillion's system of identification is being rapidly displaced by the finger print method; but Bertillion's name will always be associated with the science of identification, and his special marks index will probably always be useful in the identification of human beings by marks, scars, moles, missing and deformed members. It is true that in bureaus where special marks files are maintained not many identifications are credited to this system. Nevertheless, the few that are made are sufficiently valuable to warrant their continuance.

Card index files containing the names and aliases of criminals are also responsible for delaying the activities of some criminals and securing for them free lodgings at the state's expense.

Comparing finger prints found at the scene of crime with finger prints on file in the bureau was the next step in the evolution of police investigation and crime prevention, and is taking up more time of the identification expert each year. Many clever rogues now sojourning in penal institutions would still be plying their trade without hindrance had it not been for the keen eyes of the men in the bureau who were able to say with certainty that the prints left by a burglar were identically the same as the prints of some professional in their files.

It will be seen from this brief statement that the crime preventive function of the identification bureau is being emphasized more and more as time goes on; and though the old .gray beards in the profession are inclined to view with alarm the many suggestions for improvements in preventive work advanced by the new school of experts, the fact remains that there is a tendency to centralize all of the police records in a single bureau.

These aggregated records, popularly called "Bureau of Records," form the central clearing houses for all police complaints, reports and criminal records, and are rapidly demonstrating that when properly equipped and maintained they increase the efficiency of the entire organization. They contribute more than their share toward preventing crime; more than any other branch of the police service, considering the small force employed in each bureau.

The bureau of records does everything that was done in the old identification bureau, and, in addition thereto, furnishes to department heads the following information:

1. The location of stolen property, pawned or sold in pawn shops.
2. Description of persons pawning or selling same.
3. From a comparison of writing on pawn shop records with writing on file in bureau, occasionally the name and address of offenders are obtained.

4. From a comparison of the handwriting on worthless checks with handwriting on file in the bureau, identification officers are frequently able to supply the criminal record and history of the writer.

5. The bureau also prepares tables, charts, graphs, and maps showing where, when, and how crimes are committed, the number of complaints that are disposed of, the amount of property recovered, number of arrests, and disposition of same.

For the few officials who may be uninformed regarding the various files now used in such central clearing houses established throughout the United States, an outline is here given, with the hope that it may give them a better understanding of the scope and purposes of a modern police record system.

(1) *Complaint file.* In this file are kept, in chronological and numerical order, all complaints received by any member of the department, with reports of action taken thereon by officers detailed to investigate.

(2) *Complaint alphabetical file.* Here are filed index cards containing the names of persons identified with the complaint, including complainants, accused, witnesses, and persons who originally reported occurrence to the police.

(3) *Complaint subject file.* In this cabinet are filed, according to the subject matter, index cards with cross references to complaints.

(4) *Modus operandi file.* Cards containing a detailed description of the method employed by criminals in the commission of crimes are placed in this file.

(5) *Pawn shop and stolen propety file.* These cabinets contain the records of property pledged or sold in pawn shops, or sold to second-hand dealers, and records of stolen property. Certain articles, such as watches, cameras, autos, bikes, etc., are filed numerically, the last three numbers being used for the primary division. Unnumbered articles are filed according to the Dewey Decimal System. By an ingenious card guide arrangement, index cards containing descriptions of similar aticles fall in the same group, causing an automatic check when the card is filed.

(6) *Arrest file.* This is merely an alphabetical index to the book of arrests.

(7) *Finger print file.*

(8) *Bertillon file.*

(9) *Criminal descriptive file.* This file contains photographs and descriptions of criminals, segregated according to the criminal spe-

cialty, such as burglars, checkmen, safe blowers, etc., further divided by hair color, eye color, height, weight and age.

(10) *Special marks file.* Index cards containing a description of the visible marks, scars, moles, missing and deformed members, are filed and cross indexed to the criminal record.

(11) *Geographical file.* It is necessary to keep a record of the city, county, and state institutions from which criminal records are received. The basis of classification for these indices is an alphabetical arrangement of states, and under each state division an alphabetical arrangement of counties and cities, further subdivided by persons wanted and criminal record numbers.

(12) *Worthless check file.* Bad checks are placed in books in the order in which they are received. Books similar to kodak photo books are used for this purpose and permit the removal and inspection of checks without mutilation.

(13) *Handwriting file.* Handwriting of well-known criminals, and photographic copies and tracings of writing taken from pawn shop records, hotel and prison registers are filed in books in the order in which the original or copy was received. Some departments have made an effort to classify the styles of handwriting with some success, but up to the present time no uniform system has been devised.

(14) *Individual finger print impression file.* This is new in this country, but has been used with considerable success. Each of the ten digits of professional burglars are classified by the Larson system and filed in the cabinets on 5 x 3 cards with cross reference to original criminal record. In this cabinet are also filed the finger prints found at the scenes of crime.

(15) *Correspondence file.*

(16) *Indices for number 15.* Including alphabetical, geographical and subject matter references.

(17) *Criminal history file.*

(18) *Newspaper clipping file.*

(19) *Inventory file.*

(20) *Department personnel file.*

(21) *Miscellaneous document file.*

Police reports throughout the United States are entirely inadequate as sources of criminal statistics. This is due in part to the expense incident to the work and the lack of trained statisticians in police organizations, but it is more directly attributable to the differences of opinion as to the essential features of a police report. Regardless of what these differences may be in the minds of the various officials,

it is certain that the public is entitled to information concerning the amount of crime in the community, where and when committed, and the causes thereof.

Our country is known for its indifference in the matter of crime, its cause and prevention, and it is imperative that we begin to standardize our criminal statistics. Statisticians have been satisfied in the past to measure the amount of crime and the kind of crime in a given community by the number of arrests. We know that this is a worthless index, for reasons too obvious to mention; and the only safe guide, if we are to know the truth of crime in any locality, is a complete record of the number and kind of complaints made to various sheriffs, constables, and officers in this entire nation. Briefly, every report should contain the following detailed information:

I. TOTAL NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN EACH DEPARTMENT OR STATION WHERE MONEY OR PROPERTY HAS BEEN OBTAINED BY MEANS OF THEFT, FRAUD, TRICK OR VIOLENCE

(1) Classification of crimes according to kind, e. g., burglary, robbery, forgery, etc.

   (a) Amount of loss suffered from each.
   (b) Amount recovered.
   (c) Number of complaints disposed of.
   (d) Number pending.
   (e) Number of persons arrested on above complaints, adult and juvenile.
   (f) Complaints tabulated according to time of day.
   (g) Complaints tabulated according to districts or beats from which the report was received.

II. TOTAL NUMBER OF COMPLAINTS RECEIVED IN EACH DEPARTMENT OR STATION INCLUDING VIOLATION OF LAWS OTHER THAN THOSE GIVEN IN TABLE I

(1) Felonies, classified according to nature of crime.

   (a) Number of cases disposed of.
   (b) Number pending.
   (c) Number of arrests made in connection with each crime.
   (d) Age classification of those arrested into juvenile and adult.
   (e) Tabulated according to time of day.
   (f) Tabulated according to the district or beat from which the report was received.

(2)   Misdemeanors, classified according to nature of crime.
    (a)   Number of each disposed of.
    (b)   Number pending.
    (c)   Number of arrests in connection with each crime.
    (d)   Age classification into adult and juvenile.
    (e)   Tabulated according to time of day.
    (f)   Tabulated according to the district or beat from which the
        report was received.

(3)   City Ordinances, classified according to nature.
    (a)   Number of each disposed of.
    (b)   Number pending.
    (c)   Number of arrests in connection with each crime.
    (d)   Age classification into adult and juvenile.
    (e)   Tabulated according to time of day.
    (f)   Tabulated according to the district or beat from which the
        report was received.

III.   REPORTS OF CASUALTIES AND NUMBER OF PERSONS INJURED OR
            KILLED AS A RESULT THEREOF
    (a)   Classified according to nature, as accidents, suicides, dead
        bodies found, etc.
    (b)   Tabulated according to districts or beats.
    (c)   Tabulated according to time of day.

IV.   ALL OTHER REPORTS RECEIVING POLICE ATTENTION NOT
            INCLUDED IN TABLES I, II AND III
    (a)   Nature.
    (b)   Tabulated according to district or beat from which received.
    (c)   Tabulated according to time of day.
    (d)   Number of reports disposed of.
    (e)   Number pending.

V.   REPORTS OF ARRESTS

(1)   Classified according to crimes.
(2)   Disposition of cases in courts.
    (a)   Adult $\begin{cases} \text{male.} \\ \text{female.} \end{cases}$
    (b)   Juvenile $\begin{cases} \text{male.} \\ \text{female.} \end{cases}$

(3)   Cases pending in courts.
    (a)   Adult $\begin{cases} \text{male.} \\ \text{female.} \end{cases}$
    (b)   Juvenile $\begin{cases} \text{male.} \\ \text{female.} \end{cases}$

VI. CAUSATIVE FACTORS OF CRIMES (HEALY "THE INDIVIDUAL
DELINQUENT")

(1) Groups of causative factors.

      (a) Mental abnormalities and peculiarities.
      (b) Defective home conditions, including alcoholism.
      (c) Mental conflicts.
      (d) Improper sex experience and habits.
      (e) Bad companions.
      (f) Abnormal physical conditions, including excessive develop-
            ment.
      (g) Defects of heredity.
      (h) Defective or unsatisfied interests, including misuse or non-
            use of special abilities.
      (i) Defective early developmental conditions.
      (j) Mental shock.
      (k) Deliberate choice.
      (l) Use of stimulants or narcotics.
      (m) Experiences under legal detention.
      (n) Educational defects extreme.

(2) Analysis of mental abnormalities and peculiar mental character-
     istics.
(3) Analysis of defective home conditions.
(4) Analysis of mental conflicts.
(5) Analysis of improper sex experience.
(6) Analysis of abnormal physical conditions.
(7) Analysis of defective and unsatisfied interests.
(8) Analysis of defective early developmental conditions.
(9) Analysis of mental shock.
(10) Analysis of stimulants and narcotics.

     How shall we classify crimes and how shall be classify criminals,
have been mooted questions among police officials for some time. The
classification of crimes must be simple for the reason that they are
variously classified and defined by the penal codes of the different
states, and identification experts will not look kindly upon any at-
tempt to change the classifications and definitions that they are familiar
with.

     For the purpose of inviting discussion and assisting in bringing
this subject before police officials, I offer the following suggestions
for the classification of crimes:

I. Felonies

Assaults

Burglaries, 1st degree (night time)

Burglaries, 2nd degree (day time)

Carrying concealed weapons

Embezzlement

False pretenses

Larceny

Larceny from persons

Larceny of automobiles

Murder

Robbery

Sex offenses

Worthless checks

II. Misdemeanors

Assaults

Begging

Disorderly conduct, person or act

Disturbing the peace

Drunkenness

Gambling

Malicious mischief

Vagrancy

Joy-riding

Classifying criminals is equally difficult. There are some who believe they should be classified according to their mental make up. For example, feeble-minded, psychopathic, epileptic, etc. Others want them classified according to dominant criminal traits, such as acquisitiveness, pugnacity, sex, etc. Many believe that criminals should be classified according to the particular law they have violated. Policemen have an unwritten classification, given below, which is understood and used by members of police departments throughout the nation, and has been helpful in identifying certain types of professional crooks:

Burglars (Commonly called "Prowlers") —

Safe men (sometimes called "Pete men")

Flat workers

Porch climbers

Loft workers

Thieves—

Auto thief

Bike thief

Bank sneak

Badger game workers

Hotel thieves

Package thieves

Pennyweighters

Panel game workers

Servant thieves

Shoplifters

Pickpockets (commonly called "Dips")

CONFIDENCE MEN (Commonly called "Bunks") —

Big mitt men   Steerers
Drop the ring men   Storekeepers
Short changers

WORTHLESS CHECKS—

Checkmen   Forgers
Check kiters

ROBBERS—

Alley workers   Stick-up men
Drunk rollers   Strong arm men
Purse snatchers (commonly
  called "Moll Buzzers")

MISCELLANEOUS—

Black hander   Hop head
Fence   Snowbird
Gunmen   Yegg
Hobo

Despite the rapid advances made in the field of identification, there are still many opportunities for development in this highly interesting branch of the police service. The expert's attention has been directed mostly toward the identification of the living, but occasionally badly decomposed bodies or fragments thereof are found. The first and most important question that must be determined before the investigators can proceed is the identity of the individual whose remains are before them. At the present time it becomes necessary to go outside of the police service and employ others to do the work that rightfully belongs in the police department and more particularly the identification branch.

If sufficiently informed, the identification expert can determine sex, age, race, stature, occupation, and probable identity of the dead by an examination of the hair, blood, teeth, bones and cranial indices.

Needless to say, the personnel of a bureau of records should be carefully selected with regard to intelligence, character, and training. Competent men should be encouraged to remain in the department by the payment of salaries commensurate with the services rendered, and tenure of office should be made certain for men who properly perform their duties. Politicians should be compelled to keep their meddling fingers out of the bureau and prohibited from making politi-

cal footballs out of the men employed therein, and, finally, the bureau should not be used as a dumping ground for mental cripples, political pets and police misfits.

For those who care to give the classification of criminals further study, the following references are given:

"Criminality and Economic Conditions," by Bonger, pages 538 to 543, inclusive; "Crime and Its Repression," by Aschaffenberg, page 17; "Criminology," by Garofalo, pages 40, 41 and 59; "Modern Theories of Criminality," by De Quiros, page 110; "Revision of the Atcherley Modus Operandi System," this JOURNAL, page 229, August, 1919.